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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 003158

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [IZ](#)  
SUBJECT: PRT TIKRIT: NOTES FROM VILLAGE OF TUZ

Classified By: Classified by Steven Buckler, PRT Team Leader, for reasons 1.5 (b) and (d).

1. (U) This is a PRT Tikrit, Salah ad Din cable.

2. (C) SUMMARY. In a recent visit to ethnically-mixed Tuz, PRTOFF found a community increasingly distant both psychologically and politically from the Provincial Government in Salah ad Din. END SUMMARY.

Where are the PC Members?  
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3. (U) PRTOFF visited Tuz on September 14 accompanied by Salah ad Din's Deputy Governor, several Tikrit-area Provincial Council (PC) members and a number of Provincial Directors General (DGs). Tuz is an ethnically mixed town of about 80,000 divided between Kurds, Turkmens and Arabs in the northeast corner of Salah ad Din. Given its ethnic makeup, many residents see Tuz as in the orbit of Kirkuk, not Tikrit or any other Salah ad Din city.

4. (C) The primary purpose of the visit was for Provincial officials to meet with the 15 members of the PC from Tuz who have essentially stopped coming to PC meetings. As a result of the Sunni election boycott, Tuz members account for almost 40 percent of the PC seats, even though Tuz has only 3 percent of the population. As the PC has adopted rules of procedure that require a quorum (21 of 41 members) for decisions to be taken, the absence of Tuz members has meant that there has been no quorum and no PC votes for several months. Tuz members say that the insecure roads from Tuz to Tikrit prevent them from attending.

5. (C) Upon arrival in Tuz, the delegation arrived to a room devoid of the Tuz PC members. Various rationales for their absence were proffered to PRTOFF, including that they did not know about the meeting, it was Ramadan, or they are boycotting the PC because it does not do anything.

6. (C) PRTOFF polled the Tikrit attendees and several officials from Tuz and found a general consensus that the Tuz members see little opportunity for personal gain and feel little connection with the government of Salah ad Din. Angry with being stood up in Tuz after a dry and dusty ride on the first day of Ramadan, Tikrit-area PC members vowed to PRTOFF that they would find a way to get a quorum without counting on the Tuz group.

Kurdish IA Brigade Not Patrolling Road  
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7. (C) The Deputy Provincial Governor and one PC member told PRTOFF that the Iraqi Army Brigade responsible for Tuz was not patrolling the portion of the road from Tuz to Tikrit under its responsibility and was telling Tuz residents that it was much safer to travel to Kirkuk. (Comment: The US Army

Colonel with responsibility for that portion of the road says that it is in fact safe. End Comment.) The Deputy Governor believes that the fact that the Brigade primarily consists of Kurds means that it is are trying to steer Tuz into the orbit of the Kurdish north, and to reduce ties with Salah ad Din.

18. (C) COMMENT: Given its remote location on the eastern side of the Hamerin mountains, and its ethnic makeup, it is no surprise that many Tuz residents associate themselves more closely with the Kurdish north than with their neighbors in Salah ad Din Province. One solution to Tuz non-participation in the PC would be to hold new elections, which would likely result in a marked reduction of Tuz's power. So long as the boycott continues, the Salah ad Din PC will have a hard time getting sufficient members at meetings to achieve quorum. The need to pass a Provincial budget in the near future will mean that the PC will either need to muster almost all the non-Tuz members or pass it without a quorum, which is contrary to the rules of procedure which the PRT worked so hard to get the PC to pass. Of course if the PC takes this route, Tuz will be shut out of projects and money, further cutting them off from the Provincial government. PRT will work to encourage the Tuz members to attend meetings and stress that they will not have a better opportunity to use their clout than right now. In the absence of Tuz participation, PRT will work to ensure that the Provincial budget includes a share of projects proportional to Tuz, population and to stress that the best way to drive Tuz further into the arms of the Kurdish north would be to shut them out of GOI projects. END COMMENT.

19. (U) For additional reporting from PRT Tikrit, Salah ad Din, please see our SIPRNET reporting blog:  
<http://www.intelink.sgov.gov/wiki/Tikrit>.

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